

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please replace paragraph [0029] of the "Abstract of the Disclosure" section with the following paragraph:

[0029] An endotracheal tube cleaning apparatus 10 which can be periodically inserted into the inside of an endotracheal tube 30 to shave away mucus deposits. In a preferred embodiment, this cleaning apparatus 10 comprises a flexible central tube 12 with an inflatable balloon 40 at its distal end. Affixed to the inflatable balloon are one or more shaving rings 70, each having a squared leading edge 72 to shave away mucus accumulations 60. In operation, the uninflated cleaning apparatus 10 ~~of the present invention~~ is inserted into the endotracheal tube, until its distal end is properly aligned with or slightly beyond the distal end of the endotracheal tube. ~~After proper alignment, [[t]]~~ The balloon 40 is then inflated by a suitable inflation device, such as a syringe 14, until the balloon's shaving rings are pressed against the inside surface of the endotracheal tube. The cleaning apparatus is then pulled out of the endotracheal tube ~~and, in the process, the balloon's shaving rings to shave off the mucus deposits, from the inside of the endotracheal tube.~~ ~~The cleaning apparatus of the present invention can advantageously be used with endotracheal tubes having bactericidal films on the tubes' inside walls.~~